

forant posture, which completely disregards the real facts of contemporary life, impels the Washington politicians to brandish the big stick and conduct themselves all over the world as a Texas sheriff might in a Hollywood Western.

How long can this go on?

Clearly, Washington's foreign policy line is linked above all with the Vietnam war. It is not by chance that under cover of the anti-Korean campaign reserves are being called up for use against the people of Vietnam. There is no doubt that so long as the U.S.A. continues escalating in Southeast Asia, threatening to spread the hostilities to countries neighbouring on Vietnam, the world will not have peace. Hence the urgency of putting an end to the Vietnam war.

Washington's recklessness is dangerous for all nations of the world and perhaps above all for America's allies. The H-bomber patrols over the territories of the partners of the U.S.A., for example. And no less dangerous for these countries are the constant attempts made to involve them in U.S. gambles. The Pueblo incident too was followed by the convocation on U.S. initiative of the Nato Council to discuss the development. Why? Discussions of this kind can pursue only one object: to prepare the ground for further aggravation of the situation. Indeed, the partners of American imperialism could well echo the remark made by a last-century general about one of his allies: "We do not know whether he frightens the enemy, but, by God, he frightens us!"

The *Washington Post* symptomatically commented a few days ago: "What is happening, in short, is the self-isolation of the U.S." And indeed, America's "closest friends across the Atlantic" are increasingly "looking the other way."

Nor could it be otherwise so long as the U.S.A. steers its present political course.

It is a curious fact that each time the U.S.A. finds itself in hot water, Washington begins to speak of the need for Soviet "mediation." There has been similar talk in other Western capitals. While this is undoubtedly indirect recognition of the stabilizing, peaceable role played by the Soviet Union in the present-day world, it thoroughly exposes the big lie of the alleged "Soviet threat" on which the entire system of U.S. military alliances of the Nato type rests. But surely it is time official Washington realized that no one is obliged to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them. Washington must understand that it will have to bear full responsibility for its recklessness.

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## Background to t

WHEN the U.S. spy ship Pueblo was intercepted in the territorial waters of the Korean People's Democratic Republic, Washington hastened to release two cover-up stories:

first, that the Pueblo was an innocuous auxiliary naval vessel;

second, that the North Korean patrol boats had made an "unprovoked attack" against a peaceful oceanographic survey vessel in international waters.

But in a matter of days both of these versions collapsed. And the main blow at them was dealt by none other than the captain of the Pueblo, Lloyd Mark Bucher. Here are some of his replies to questions put by newsmen at a Phyongyang press conference on January 26:

"My ship has the exclusive mission to conduct espionage activities....

"We had carried out espionage activities in the coastal waters of Korea and other parts of Asia on many occasions. We had intruded into the coastal waters of the Soviet Union and China and repeatedly perpetrated espionage acts....

"The espionage mission was mainly to detect, after a trip off the Soviet Far East, military targets along the shores of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, distribution of the radar networks, various electric waves, the manoeuvrability of the naval force of the Korean People's Army, accommodation capacities of the ports, the number of incoming and outgoing vessels and their capabilities, as well as to research the oceanic conditions along the coast."

Bucher's unequivocal answers compelled the U.S. Defence Department to drop the pretence and concede that the Pueblo was a naval intelligence ship equipped to intercept radar and other electronic signals and to gather espionage information, and that it had been in the Wonsan Bay off the coast of the K.P.D.R. for about two weeks.

But having said this, the Pentagon has not mustered the courage to tell the whole story, to admit that the Pueblo was caught red-handed in the territorial waters of the K.P.D.R. and not on the high seas. It may be assumed that the admission will come in time. For the evidence is too weighty to be denied.

Let us take only one fact. Captain Bucher declared—and this has been confirmed by the

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